

JESUS CALLED FOLLOWERS

CORE PASSAGE: JOHN 1:35-37,40-51

CONTEXT

John's Gospel begins with a description of Jesus as the Logos, the eternal "Word" of God, a signifier of Jesus's divinity and a bold statement concerning the Son's co-existence with the Father prior to creation (vv. 1-5). John also summarized John the Baptist's ministry, who pointed to Jesus's messianic identity and mission. Jesus is the Word who became flesh (v. 14) and "the Lamb of God" who died to take away the sins of the world (vv. 29-34). Some of John's disciples took his words to heart and followed Jesus (vv. 35-51).

KEY CONCEPT

Following Jesus means acknowledging Him as Savior, God, and King.

As you examine John 1:35-37,40-51:

- Recognize that John acknowledged Jesus as the Lamb of God, and thus, his disciples followed Jesus.
- Contemplate the words of Nathanael's response when he witnessed Jesus's omniscience.



TIMELINE

John the Baptist Calls People to Repentance in Preparation for Jesus (Matthew 3:1-12)

Jesus Is Tempted in the Wilderness (Luke 4:1-13)

Jesus Performs His First Miracle at the Wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11)

John Baptizes Jesus in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13-17)

SESSION STUDY:
Jesus Calls Disciples to Follow Him (John 1:35-51)

Daily Readings

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1: John 1:35-42 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4: Matthew 4:12-22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2: John 1:43-51 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 5: Luke 5:1-11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3: Mark 1:14-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 6: Psalm 24 |



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

JOHN 1:35-37,40-44

JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD AND THE MESSIAH, IS WORTHY TO BE FOLLOWED.

Circle each instance of the word “follow,” and underline the reason it was used.

35 The next day, John was standing with two of his disciples. **36** When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!” **37** The two disciples heard him say this and followed Jesus. . . . **40** Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard John and followed him. **41** He first found his own brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated “the Christ”), **42** and he brought Simon to Jesus. When Jesus saw him, he said, “You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which is translated “Peter”). **43** The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. He found Philip and told him, “Follow me.” **44** Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter.

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

CALLING: The calling of God to salvation happens in two ways: externally through the proclamation of the gospel and internally through the Holy Spirit working in the heart of the person who hears. Both of these callings are essential, and both work together to bring someone to faith in Christ (2 Timothy 1:8-10).

Key Concept: Following Jesus means acknowledging Him as Savior, God, and King.



In his Gospel account, the apostle John wrote down Jesus's teachings and miracles with the purpose of showing that Jesus is the Son of God (20:31). John recorded foundational truths concerning Jesus's messianic identity and details of His divine mission, including the testimony of John the Baptist and descriptions of Jesus's first followers.

Like other Gospel writers, John wrote about John the Baptist, Jesus's forerunner who came preaching a message of repentance and proclaiming that the kingdom of heaven had come. Many heard John's message and believed him, being baptized by him as a sign of their faith in God. But a few were called to experience the fruition of John's message up close and personal.

Andrew, a follower of John the Baptist, heard John's proclamation that Jesus is "the Lamb of God" (1:36), a title foretelling Jesus's sacrifice for sin. Realizing that Jesus is the Messiah, Andrew shared this news with his brother, Simon, and brought him to Christ. Jesus then issued a name-change to Simon, marking the start of his new identity as one of Jesus's closest disciples.

How does the title "the Lamb of God" point to Jesus's purpose?

The message of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection demands a response. We either receive the message and embrace it in faith or we reject it and suffer the consequences for that rejection. The key word in this passage is "follow," which is the proper response to hearing and receiving the good news of Jesus's sinless life, death on the cross, and resurrection to take away sin. And the proclamation of this gospel constitutes a call upon all those who hear it to repent of sin, to believe in Jesus, and to follow Him with their whole heart.

What are some ways you are following Jesus, the Lamb of God who has called you through the proclamation of His gospel?



PERSONAL PREPARATION

JOHN 1:45-51

JESUS, THE SON OF GOD AND THE KING OF ISRAEL, WILL REVEAL MANY THINGS TO HIS PEOPLE.

Underline words or phrases that relate to the change Nathanael experienced concerning his belief about Jesus's identity.

45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law (and so did the prophets): Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth." **46** "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Nathanael asked him. "Come and see," Philip answered.

47 Then Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said about him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." **48** "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you," Jesus answered. **49** "Rabbi," Nathanael replied, "You are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel!" **50** Jesus responded to him, "Do you believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." **51** Then he said, "Truly I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Key Concept: Following Jesus means acknowledging Him as Savior, God, and King.



“Come and see” (v. 46). These three words sum up the invitation to experience the newness of life found in embracing the good news of Jesus as the Messiah.

The end of John 1 details the events surrounding the call of Jesus to His first disciples. We saw the good news about Jesus spread via word of mouth as the news traveled from John the Baptist to Andrew to Peter. Then Jesus Himself called Philip, and this new follower relayed the message to Nathanael, who initially responded with skepticism, maybe even disdain. Whether the gospel we share is welcomed, questioned, or rejected, it is crucial that followers of Jesus continue sharing the message about the Savior who came to set people free from their sins.

How can we help others “come and see” Jesus for who He is and what He has done to save sinners?

This revelation prompted Nathanael’s confession: “You are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel!” (v. 49).

Nathanael was amazed at Jesus’s power and authority, yet Jesus told him that “greater things” were in store (v. 50). Alluding to the Old Testament account of Jacob’s vision of a stairway between heaven and earth (see Genesis 28), Jesus told Nathanael that he would see “angels” ascend and descend upon Him, the Son of Man (John 1:51). Jesus boldly declared Himself to be the connection between heaven and earth, and no one comes to the Father except through Him (14:6).

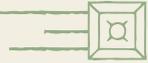
How have you seen skepticism give way to faith in yourself or in others?

This interaction between Philip and his friend Nathanael revealed further reasons to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Prior to their gospel conversation, Jesus had already taken note of Nathanael, having observed him underneath the shade of a fig tree. Jesus’s claim pointed to His divine omniscience as He paid attention even to one who would be skeptical of His identity.

CHURCH CONNECTION

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He is also the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel. He calls people to follow Him, and believers, likewise, should call on others to come and see Jesus.

GROUP EXPERIENCE



CHOOSING TO FOLLOW

*Read the passages below. Write down what compelled the disciples to follow Jesus.
Then record what convinced you that Jesus is the Messiah.*

ANDREW (John 1:35-37,40-41)

SIMON PETER (John 1:41-42)

PHILIP (John 1:43-45)

NATHANAEL (John 1:45-49)

YOURSELF

Based on this passage, what does it mean to follow Jesus?

How has this passage encouraged you to grow in your mission of making disciples?



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HEAD

How can we know more about Jesus and His Word to help our own discipleship and evangelism?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Pray through Psalm 24. Praise Jesus for being the King of glory, the Son of God, and our Savior (vv. 7-10). Thank God that Jesus, whom we follow in faith, saves us and leads us into His holy presence (vv. 3-6).

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HEART

What questions regarding your faith do you need to pray about and seek faithful counsel?



HANDS

Who will you invite to “come and see” Jesus as the Messiah and Savior who is worthy of our faith and following?

